

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) An automated, computer-implemented method for carrying out financial transactions within a Central Securities Depository (CSD), comprising an automated clearing process implemented by a computer and an automated settlement process implemented by a computer, the clearing process ~~being the process of preparing the-a transactions transaction~~ for the settlement process, the clearing process comprising using the following automated sub processes sub-process steps implemented by a computer:

- selecting a settlement rule to be followed in the clearing process, the rule defining how the transaction is to be settled,
- defining a settlement obligation group, ~~said group comprising~~ including a number of settlement instructions ~~that all have~~ to be settled at the same time,
- “locking in” of the assets to which the transaction concern~~concerns~~, the locking-in having the effect of reserving said assets for a specific settlement instruction,

and the settlement process ~~comprising~~ includes the following automated sub processes sub-process steps implemented by a computer:

- selecting transfer instructions for all settlement obligations belonging to said settlement obligation group, said transfer instructions being irrevocable instructions to transfer (the locked-in) assets between participants in the CSD,
- checking that all~~said~~ transfer instructions are carried out successfully, and
- reporting the result of the settlement to the participants involved.

2. (currently amended) An automated system for carrying out financial transactions within a Central Securities Depository (CSD), said system comprising:

a computer having an input and a output,

wherein the computer is configured to perform an automated function for a clearing process and an automated function for a settlement process, the function for the computer being configured to implement the clearing process function being arranged to prepare by preparing a transaction transaction for the settlement process, with said function for the clearing process comprising using the following computer implemented sub-functions:

- an automated sub-function for the selection of a settlement rule to be utilised in the clearing process, the rule defining how the transaction is to be settled,
 - an automated sub-function for the definition of a settlement obligation group, said group comprising including a number of settlement instructions that all have to be settled at the same time, and
 - an automated sub-function for the “locking in” of the assets to which the transaction concern, the locking-in having the effect of the system reserving said assets for a specific settlement instruction, and
- with wherein the computer is configured to perform the function for the settlement process comprising function using the following computer-implemented sub-functions:
- an automated sub-function for selecting transfer instructions for all settlement obligations belonging to said settlement obligation group, said transfer instructions being irrevocable instructions to transfer the locked-in assets between participants in the CSD,

- an automated sub-function for checking that all said transfer instructions are carried out successfully, and
- an automated sub-function for reporting the result of the settlement to the participants involved.

3. (New) An automated, computer-implemented apparatus for carrying out financial transactions within a Central Securities Depository (CSD), comprising:

 a clearing computer for preparing a transaction for the settlement process and including:
 means for selecting a settlement rule to be followed in the clearing process, the rule defining how the transaction is to be settled,
 means for defining a settlement obligation group including a number of settlement instructions to be settled at the same time,
 means for locking in of the assets to which the transaction concerns, the locking-in having the effect of reserving said assets for a specific settlement, and
 a settlement computer including:
 means for selecting transfer instructions for all settlement obligations belonging to said settlement obligation group, said transfer instructions being irrevocable instructions to transfer the locked-in assets between participants in the CSD,
 means for checking that said transfer instructions are carried out successfully, and
 means for reporting the result of the settlement to the participants involved.